

BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. 05908-00005
QUAD 059-95-0114
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

Br 5
red
green

YOUR NAME: Walton H. Craig III/SPLIA DATE: 6/12/82
93 N. Country Rd.

YOUR ADDRESS: Setauket, L.I., N.Y. 11733 TELEPHONE: 516-941-9444

ORGANIZATION (if any): Division of Museum Services, County of Nassau

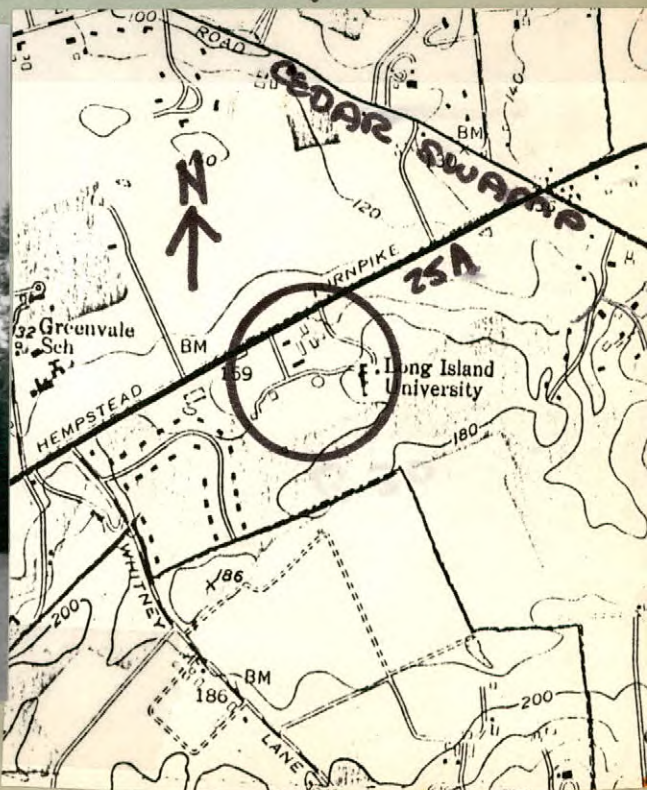
IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): E.F. Hutton Post Estate (C.W. Post College)
2. COUNTY: Nassau TOWN/CITY: Oyster Bay VILLAGE: Brookville
3. STREET LOCATION: Rte. 25A; southeast side; east of Whitney Ln. & Whitney Lane
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public ☐ b. private ☒
5. PRESENT OWNER: C.W. Post (L.I. Univ.) ADDRESS: occupant
6. USE: Original: residence Present: administration building
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐
Interior accessible: Explain _____

DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☐ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐
e. cobblestone ☐ f. shingles ☒ g. stucco ☒ other: _____
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☐
(if known) b. wood frame with light members ☒
c. masonry load bearing walls ☐
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
10. CONDITION: a. excellent ☒ b. good ☐ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site ☒ b. moved ☐ if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known):
adaptive use as college buildings. The setting has changed with the construction of many new college buildings.

12. PHOTO: WHC-Br-roll1,5 from southwest 13. MAP: NYS DOT-Hicksville Quad



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known ☒ b. zoning ☐ c. roads ☐
d. developers ☐ e. deterioration ☐
f. other: _____
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☐
d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐ f. greenhouse ☒
g. shop ☐ h. gardens ☒
i. landscape features: _____
j. other: stables; new academic buildings
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
a. open land ☒ b. woodland ☒
c. scattered buildings ☒
d. densely built-up ☐ e. commercial ☐
f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒
h. other: academic buildings

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:

(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

The buildings are located on the south side of Route 25A, between Cedar Swamp Road and Whitney Lane. The mansion sits atop a small hill which slopes to the west with a great lawn and meadow. To the south of the building are the formal gardens. The estates' original wooden post and rail fence still runs along a portion of Rte. 25A.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

The English Tudor, seventy-room main house is so large that it resembles a small country village rather than a single building. Several wings intersect at irregular angles to create small courtyards, some paved as entrance or service courts, others landscaped as gardens. The projecting wings break up the tremendous length of the building, and its relatively low height gives a domestic scale to an unusually large floor plan.

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1921

Marion C. Coffin L.A.

ARCHITECT: Hart & Shape, Lewis & Valentine, Landscape Cont-
ractors

BUILDER: E.W. Howell & Company, Babylon

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: The buildings are well preserved.

A house built c.1912 for Mrs. Wm. Prime by architect Addison Mizner is believed to have been incorporated into the main house. (see Br 3).

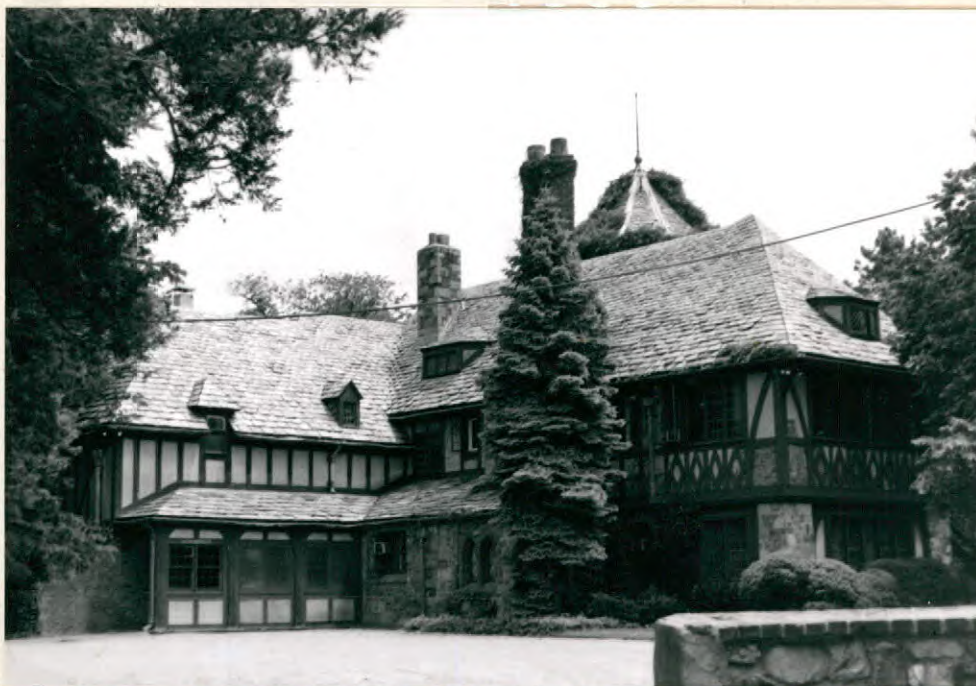
W.A. Prime in 1914.

21. SOURCES: Beaux-Arts Estates, Sclare & Sclare, 1979

N.Y. Times, 3/17/79

E.W. Howell, 1933, Noted L.I. Homes

22. THEME: E. Belcher Hyde's 1914, Atlas of Nassau County.



A smaller tudor residence in back of main house, built for Eleanor Close Riggs, Mrs. Post's daughter.

Photo: WHC-Br-roll-1,4 from northwest



DAUGHTER

The playhouse, built for Nedenia Post (Dina Merrill)
Photo: WHC-Br-roll-1,6 from southeast



A very large farm building on the estate.

Photo: B roll 8, neg 6a (GGW) FROM NORTH



a stable building

Photo: B roll 8, neg 5a (GGW)



original entrance ~~house~~, from northwest

Photo: B roll18,neg9a (GGW)

note the small, old, private policeman's booth at the left.



Br 5

Residence of Mr. F. S. von Stade

Peabody, Wilson & Brown, Architects

This residence is one of several illustrated in this portfolio wherein the equipment has been installed by our organization.

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LONG ISLAND HOMES



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Garden of
Mr. Edward F. Hutton

Miss Marian Coffin,
Architect

NASSAU BRICK CO.

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FARMINGDALE

LONG ISLAND

17 Marjorie Merriweather Post/ Edward F. Hutton Estate, Hillwood, Brookville

Hart & Shape, architects, 1921; Marian C. Coffin, landscape architect; estate now the Administration Center of C. W. Post College, Long Island University; located off Northern Boulevard

Marjorie Merriweather Post (1887–1973) was the daughter of Charles W. Post, the founder of the Postum Cereal Company, a firm that she inherited in 1914 following her father's death. In 1920 she married Edward F. Hutton, a New York stockbroker and the founder of the Wall Street firm of E. F. Hutton and Company. Together they began to merge the Postum Cereal Company with firms that produced other well-known brand-name foods, including Jell-O, Maxwell House coffee, Sanka, and Birdseye frozen foods, eventually creating the General Foods Corporation.

After their marriage, the Huttons began making plans for a Brookville estate, which they christened Hillwood. They commissioned architect Charles M. Hart of the New York firm of Hart & Shape to design a Tudor-styled, half-timbered residence on the site of an older, existing frame house. The new building was constructed in 1921 by E. W. Howell and Company of Babylon, Long Island. In addition to the main house, the estate included a large garage and servants' quarters and a horse farm. Adjacent to the main house, a smaller residence, also designed in the Tudor Style, with an octagonal observation tower was built for one of Mrs. Post's daughters, Eleanore Close Riggs. Nearby was a playhouse, originally a thatched cottage, built for Mrs. Post's youngest daughter, Nedenia, who later changed her name to Dina Merrill and pursued a career as an actress.

The Huttons were divorced in 1935, and some time later Edward F. Hutton purchased the Philip Gossler residence, ~~also~~^{NOT} in Brookville. Both Hillwood and the Robinson/Gossler/Hutton Residence (see page 144) now form part of C. W. Post College. The Robinson/Gossler/Hutton Residence is the college's fine arts center, and Hillwood serves as the college's administration center.

Marjorie remarried several times, but in 1958, after her fourth divorce, she resumed her maiden name and thereafter was known as "Mrs." Marjorie Merriweather Post. Hillwood was acquired by Long Island University and became the college center in the 1950s. The center was later renamed C. W. Post College in memory of Mrs. Post's father. The main house, as pointed out, is now the administrative center, and the garage and servants' quarters have been transformed into a student-services building. The horse farm continues as an equestrian center, and Eleanore's house is now a graduate center and admissions building.

Mrs. Post owned several other large estates that have also been converted to public use. Her Washington, D.C.,

17-1 (opposite above) Garden or south elevation

17-2 (opposite below) Main-floor plan

Beaux-Arts Estates, Sclare & Sclare, 1979



17-3 West elevation

home, also called Hillwood, was given to the Smithsonian Institution; her summer retreat, Topridge, in the Adirondacks near Saranac Lake, was willed to C. W. Post College in 1973 and is now a part of the Adirondack State Forest Preserve; and her Palm Beach estate, Mar-A-Lago, was given to the United States government for use as a presidential retreat.

At the Brookville Hillwood, the seventy-room main house is so large that it resembles a small English country village rather than a single building. Several wings intersect at irregular angles to create small courtyards, some paved as entry or service courts, others landscaped as gardens. The projecting wings break up the tremendous length of the building, and its relatively low height gives a domestic scale to an unusually large floor plan.

The original approach to Hillwood was from the northwest, where a broad, gently sloping meadow allowed a dramatic view of the full length of the house. A porch located off the motor, or entry, court leads into a low-ceilinged entry hall and then into the two-story-high great hall, which spans the full width of the house from the sheltered garden, or dogwood terrace, to the east to the expansive, open hillside to the west.

On the north side of the great hall were located the dining room, which opened onto the dogwood terrace, and the

kitchen and service wing, which were placed diagonally to the main section of the house. The south side of the great hall led to the drawing room, study, and sun room, the latter of which had an entrance out to the elaborate formal gardens. The children's wing also projects out from this side of the great hall. It is set at a diagonal angle to the main house and forms an end of the dogwood terrace.

To the north two later additions to the house provided more service space and several extra guest bedrooms. These wings were connected to the main portion of the house by bridged overpasses that were open on the ground floor, with the second floor and roofs running continuously above. The arrangement created a semienclosed service court, visually separated from the entrance court and the landscaped gardens.

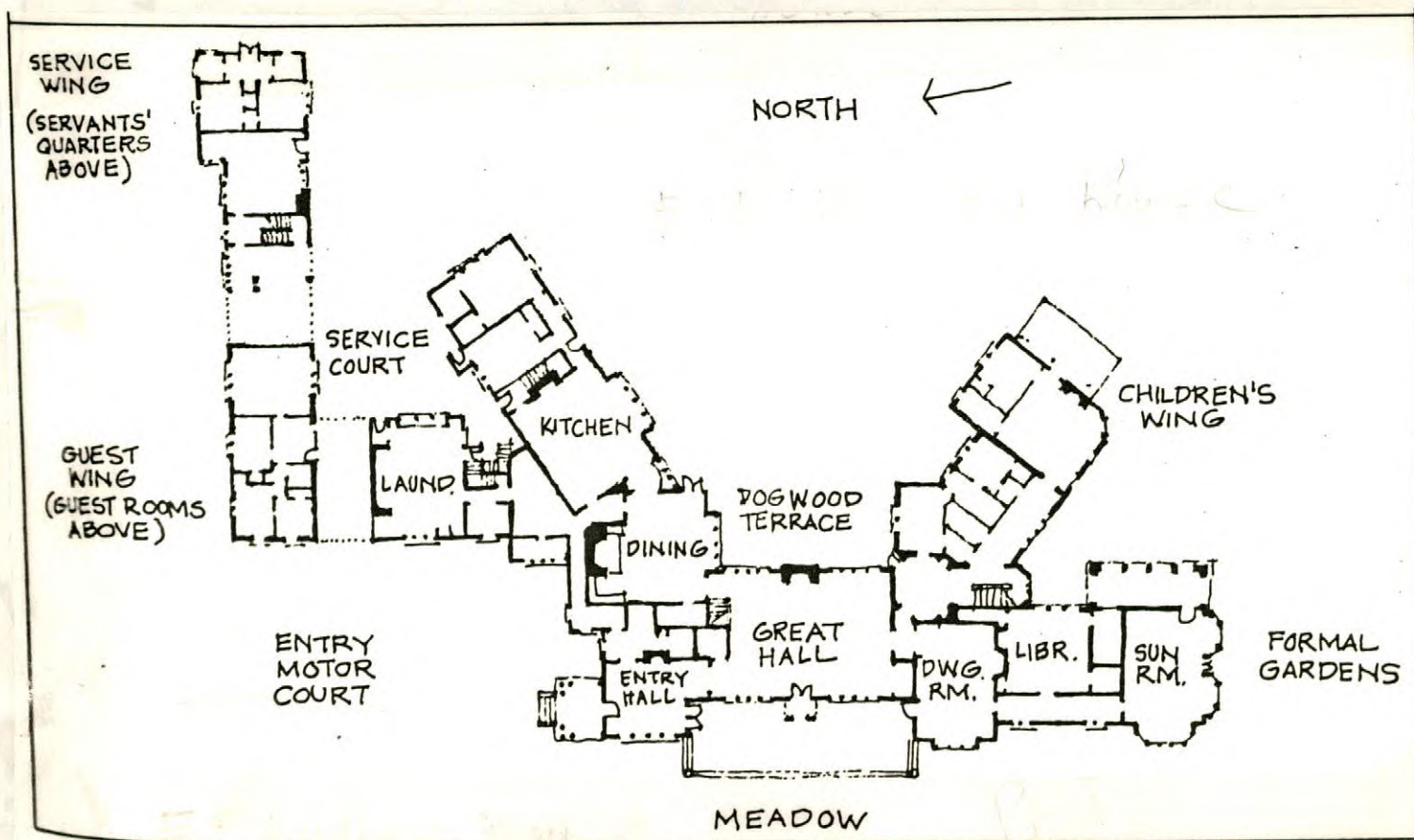
Most of the interior spaces of the house have since been altered for use as administrative-office space, but the original character of the great hall has been preserved. It is reminiscent of a medieval Tudor hunting lodge, with exposed heavy-timber trusswork, a variation on the English "King Post" truss, and with mounted animal heads decorating the walls and balustraded mezzanine. This open mezzanine connects the separate wings of the upper floors.

The exterior of the house is detailed with roughhewn, half-timbered patterns and also recalls English Tudor and medieval period designs. A bay window in the nursery wing has a curved underpanel, or soffit, ornamented with the carved silhouettes of medieval fairy-tale characters, and the south elevation, facing the gardens, is ornamented with heraldic floral patterns.

Although the configuration of Hillwood is asymmetrical, its physical masses radiate from the great hall, which functions as the focal point of the house. This space is not visibly expressed on the western exterior elevation, since the hall is horizontally divided by an upper mezzanine at that point. On the east, however, the diagonal lines of the projecting side wings lead toward the great hall and reinforce the dramatic two-story-high space within.

The garden landscape surrounding the main house was designed for the Huttons by Marian C. Coffin, whose site plan included both formal and naturalistic, or Romantic, elements. A major axis extended from the southern end of the house, leading through a covered arbor and a formal flower garden to a circular putting green. This axis continued into the distance along a woodland walk. A cross-axis incorporated a brick-arched promenade, designed as a rose arbor, which stretched from the putting green to a circular rose garden. A separate magnolia garden led back

Beaux-Arts Estates, Sclare & Sclare,
1979



E.F. Hutton House Floor Plan

Beaux-Arts Estates, Sclare & Sclare, 1979

toward the house to the sheltered dogwood terrace. A tennis court and topiary garden were also included in the overall plan. Many elements of the original landscape design may still be recognized in the gardens located to the south of the main house.

Charles Mansfield Hart (1886–1968)* was born in New York and educated at the Pratt Institute School of Architecture. After graduating in 1905, he traveled through England and France, and on returning to New York he practiced as a partner in the architectural firm of Hart & Shape. This office planned several country residences in the New York area and redesigned the Timber Point Yacht Club (c. 1924) in Great River, Long Island. Hart also served as consulting architect on the design of the Exeter Inn (1930) in Exeter, New Hampshire, and the Williamsburg Inn (1934) in Williamsburg, Virginia. Hart was later the senior partner in the firms of Hart, Jerman & Associates and Hart, Benvenaga & Associates, the architects of the Williamsburg Savings Bank in Brooklyn and the Suffolk County Office Building in Bay Shore, Long Island.

Marian Cruger Coffin (1872–1957), a grandniece of the well-known American artist John Trumbull, was a painter as well as a landscape architect. Along with landscape designer Ellen B. Shipman (see page 148) and architects Theodate Pope and Julia Morgan (see page 18), Mrs. Coffin was one of the most famous women designers who practiced during the Beaux-Arts period.

In addition to the site plan for Hillwood, Mrs. Coffin worked on the gardens for the Lloyd Bryce/Childs Frick Estate, Clayton, in Roslyn Harbor (see page 83) and on the Marshall Field III Estate, Caumsett, at Lloyd Neck (see page 170). She also designed the landscaping for the Charles H. Sabin Estate in Southampton and for the Irving Brokaw Estate in Mill Neck, both on Long Island, and she planned many large gardens in Connecticut and in other New England states.

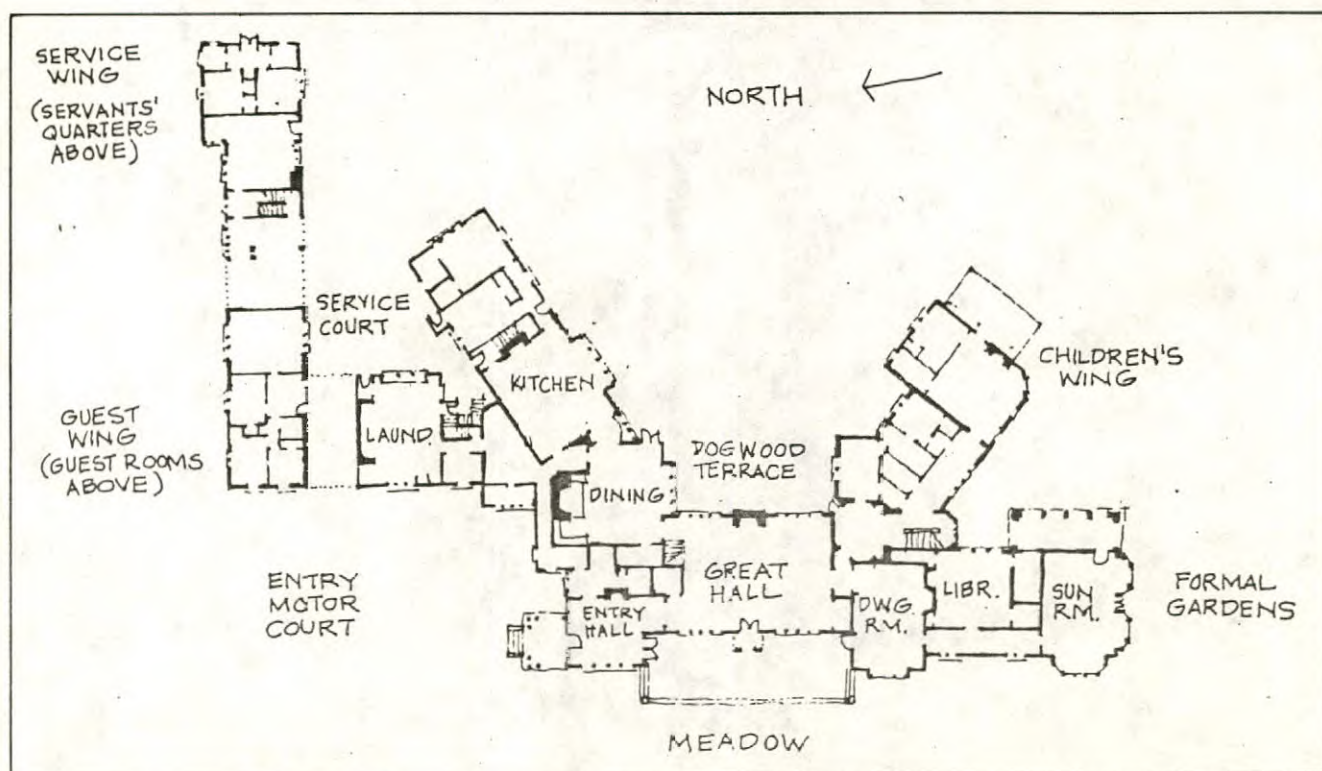
Beaux-Arts Estates, Sclare & Sclare
1979



17-4 (above) Decorated soffit of a bay window projecting from the children's wing



17-5 (right) Great hall



Estate, Idle Hour, at Oakdale (see page 209), the use of axes in the interior spatial organization was an important device. Exterior axial vistas were equally important in the layout of the Herbert L. Pratt Estate, The Braes, at Glen Cove (see page 95) and in the John S. Phipps Estate, Westbury House, at Old Westbury (see page 123), as well as in the master plans of the Egerton L. Winthrop, Jr., Estate at Syosset (see page 149) and the William R. Coe Estate, Planting Fields, at Upper Brookville (see page 155).

Theories of *proportion* and balance, such as the Golden Mean, were used as reference tools to refine physical measurements, just as Le Corbusier's Modular System is employed today. *Symmetry* was another reference tool used to investigate or emphasize the visual balance or proportion of masses. Although designs might be *asymmetrical*, or irregular, the relative proportion of masses was still studied in order to achieve a visual balance. Examples of *symmetrical* schemes include the George McKesson Brown Estate at Huntington (see page 177); the Foxhall Keene/William Grace Holloway Estate at Old Westbury (see page 118); and the Herbert L. Pratt Estate, The Braes, at Glen Cove (see page 95). *Asymmetrical*, or irregular, schemes include the William R. Coe Estate, Planting Fields, at Upper Brookville (see page 155); the William Bayard Cutting Estate, Westbrook, at Great River (see fig. I-35); and the Marjorie Merriweather Post/Edward F. Hutton Estate, Hillwood, at Brookville (see fig. I-36).

The development of an overall *master plan* or site layout was an integral part of the estate design. It began with the relationship of the buildings to the particular characteristics of the site. This concept is illustrated in the positioning of the George McKesson Brown Residence at Huntington (see page 177) on the crest of a hill that slopes down to a large boat harbor. Another good example is the relationship of the Marshall Field III Residence, Caumsett, at Lloyd Neck (see page 170), to a lagoon that opens onto Long Island Sound. The Harry F. Guggenheim Residence, Falaise, at Sands Point (see page 67), is perched dramatically on a steep cliff overlooking the water, and the Robinson/Gossler/Hutton Residence, at Brookville (see page 144), sits atop a hill overlooking a vast meadow and farmland.

The *approach* to the main building was an important element of the master plan. A long, axial entry drive leads to the F. W. Woolworth Residence, Winfield Hall, at Glen Cove (see page 91), and a grand, tree-lined *allée* is the main approach to the John S. Phipps Residence, Westbury

I-35 (opposite above) William Bayard Cutting Estate, Westbrook, Great River. The main-floor plan illustrates an asymmetrical, or irregular, design

I-36 (opposite below) Marjorie Merriweather Post/Edward F. Hutton Estate, Hillwood, Brookville. The main-floor plan provides another illustration of an asymmetrical design



Lewis & Valentine, Landscape Contractors

RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. EDWARD F. HUTTON
ROSLYN, LONG ISLAND

Hart & Shape, Architects



GREAT HALL
RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. EDWARD F. HUTTON
ROSLYN, LONG ISLAND

Hart & Shape, Architects

E.W. Howell 1933

Noted L.I. Homes